Medicine For heart Problems

*94. SHRI P. PRABHAKAR REDDY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:—

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item published in the Hindustan Times, dated the 17th October, 1999 under the caption, "Indian finds medicines for heart".

(b) if so, the details thereof and Government's reaction thereto; and

(c) what steps are proposed to be taken to permit the use of this medicine on an extensive scale in India, so as to benefit the people suffering from high blood pressure, diabetes and cardiac diseases?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI N.T. SHANMUGAM): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) Ramipril, an angiotensin converting enzyme (ACE) inhibitor has been approved for marketing in the country for uses in treatment of hypertension, cardiac failure and following myocardial infraction to improve survival in patients with clinical evidence in heart failure. Ramipril, available in various strengths, is marketed in the country by a number of firms.

The indication for which the drug has been recommended in the press briefing i.e. (prevention of complication in high risk patients even without prior heart failure and prevention of diabetes) is relatively new. It is also well known that life style modifications like low fat, high fibre, diet, physical exercise, avoidance of tobacco and stress management are also helpful in such high risk patients.

The findings of Dr. Salim Yusuf's study that Ramipril may be the first drug to prevent diabetes are yet to be established.

Unmanned level crossings

*95. SHRI RAHASBIHARI BARIK: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) the number of unmanned level crossing in the country, zone-wise;

(b) whether Government propose to upgrade the communication system of the unmanned level crossings in the country;

(c) whether private sector is proposed to be involved for the purpose; and

(d) if so, the steps taken in that direction?